



Wesley Edgar, Anthony Schofield, David Huston and Eugeny Bastrakov, look over data from Navarre Minerals core samples. Picture: KERRI KINGSTON.

Navarre's drilling success

STAWELL - Stawell based mineral explorer Navarre Minerals' search for copper in western Victoria will receive a major boost when a joint Federal and State Government funded drilling program gets underway in April this year.

The 16-18 hole drilling program is set to be managed by Deep Exploration Technologies Cooperative Research Centre in collaboration with Geoscience Australia and the Geological Survey of Victoria.

The program will be targeting the emerging Miga Arc copper belt of western Victoria, which extends from south of Glenthompson to northwest of Horsham with an objective to establish if the belt has potential to host significant copper deposits.

Through this program, the government geoscience agencies will be looking to conduct full geological analyses on samples collected, believing that they have the potential to reveal a major type of deposit called porphyry-copper.

In that case, the Miga Arc will be viewed as being similar to South America's Andes Mountains, which are host to the world's largest known collection of porphyry copper deposits.

Navarre Minerals currently hosts one of western Victoria's most significant copper prospects, known as Eclipse, which is located near Cherrypool, 60 kilometres south of Horsham. Another example of the potential of the Miga Arc is Stavely Minerals' Thursday's Gossan copper deposit that sits 65 kilometres south of Eclipse, near Glenthompson.

Three Geoscience Australia members ran a series of analyses over the rocks located in these two areas late last year, and were cautiously optimistic

about what they found.

"With what we've done so far, it is consistent with the idea that 500 million years ago the Miga Arc was similar in setting to South America's Andes. It is quite plausible at this stage," David Huston, an economic geologist from Geoscience Australia, said in December 2013.

Although there has been a shift to conducting geological exploration using remote-sensing technology, such as Navarre Minerals' recent IP geophysics survey, drilling must occur in order to understand exactly where the primary target areas are located.

Mr Huston also hopes the drilling will establish a 'fairway' of prospective rocks for mineral explorers to target.

"We know where they are in some places, but where do they go under cover? We have information from geophysics, but we want to get the rocks in our hands and say 'Yes, these are the prospective rocks and this is where mineral explorers should target their efforts,'" Mr Huston recently told Mining News (miningnews.com.au).

The Miga Arc drilling program has been backed by the Victorian Government who in last year's state budget, committed \$19.2 million in funding for the state's earth resources industry.

In 2013, the Victorian Government released an action plan designed to deliver a strong and responsible earth resources industry that makes a bigger contribution to Victoria's economy and creates more jobs and investment in rural and regional Victoria, with additional exploration activity driving a new generation of resources projects in the state.

Managing Director of Navarre Minerals, Geoff McDermott

has welcomed the Victorian Government's initiative.

"We are excited that the Victorian Government recognises the significance of the Miga Arc and is investing in a major drilling program to unlock the copper potential," Mr McDermott said.

"The possibility of a copper deposit being found in the region would be a great boost to local communities."

Mr McDermott said it would also benefit other industries in the region, including construction, energy, water and transport. Any mine in the region would also likely take advantage of the nearby deep water port located at Portland with ships being used to transport mined concentrates to overseas markets.

"A copper mine has the potential to employ several hundreds of people directly and many hundreds more indirectly through contractor and supplier services," he said.

"We can utilise our existing infrastructure in western Victoria, such as our highway networks, our power (with the renewable energy wind farm near Glenthompson) and our water via the Wimmera-Mallee pipeline. Any project is going to benefit from this existing infrastructure."

The drilling will take some time to complete, with final results from the project expected to be delivered by June 2015.

"The work the Government geological agencies are embarking on is likely to deliver a lot of important geological information to whet the appetite of mineral explorers and investors alike," Mr McDermott said.

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Twilight cinema makes a return

STAWELL - Twilight cinema action returns to Stawell's Cato Park tonight, thanks to the Northern Grampians Shire Youth Action Council.

Screening 'Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs II', the cinema event will be held from 6pm.

The Youth Action Council has also arranged for local acoustic duo Swift Revenge to play as the sun sets, while the Rotary Club of Stawell will be cooking a barbecue for tea.

There will also be a wide range of movie food available for purchase.

Members of the community are urged to get along to Cato Park tonight before 6pm and enjoy the second twilight cinema.

Car boot sale

STAWELL - Stawell Agricultural Society will be conducting a special car boot sale in conjunction with the next Stawell Farmers Market.

The Farmers Market and car boot sale will take place at Laidlaw Park on Sunday, March 30 from 9am to 1pm. Sites cost \$10 and gates open at 7am. Some sites will be undercover.

Site bookings are essential, phone 0419 445 095.

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